

VZCZCXRO2533  
PP RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHNEH  
DE RUEHNE #0214/01 0351034  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 041034Z FEB 09  
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5275  
INFO RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RHHJJPI/PACOM IDHS HONOLULU HI  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 1524  
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 4263  
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 3494  
RUEHNEH/AMCONSUL HYDERABAD 0223  
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 1917  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 5765  
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 2365  
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI 9303  
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI 3317  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 5905  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 7581  
RHOVVKG/COMSEVENTHFLT  
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL

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SIPDIS

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STATE FOR SCA/PPD, PA/RRU

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USDOC FOR 4530/IEP/ANESA/OSA FOR BILL MURPHY

E.O. 12958:N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: AFGHANISTAN, PALESTINE / GAZA  
INCURSION, IRAN / PALESTINE, INDIA-SRI LANKA RELATIONS;  
NEW DELHI.

This countrywide cable reports on relevant media  
reaction/opinion from India's large non-English press.  
The Mission reports on English-language media via email  
through the daily "Early Edition" summary.

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AFGHANISTAN  
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[1](#)1. "OBAMA'S AFGHANISTAN POLICY," editorial in January 23  
centrist Cuttack Oriya daily SAMAJA. "President Obama's  
plan to deploy 30,000 troops to Afghanistan to intensify  
the war on terror has received only lukewarm response  
from the European nations. At the upcoming April 3 NATO  
Summit Obama will seek the allies' support for his anti-  
terror moves. Response from Germany, which does not  
approve of the Obama plan, and Pakistan, which has some  
reservations, will be crucial. It seems military  
operations in Afghanistan will be strengthened in the  
coming days. This will make fundamentalists stir the  
anti-American sentiment in Pakistan. In this situation  
Obama will be compelled to review the diplomatic ties  
with Islamabad which may result in a shift in America's  
South Asia policy."

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PALESTINE / GAZA INCURSION  
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[1](#)2. "IDEAL COURAGE BY TURKEY", editorial in February 3

right-of-center Urdu daily MUNSIF, Hyderabad: "The courage and boldness shown by Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdghan at the World Economic Forum's session is extremely laudable. Israel's aggression on Gaza continues on one pretext or another. People affected by bombardment and missile attacks on Gaza are facing severe misery and troubles. But the Arab and Muslim rulers are mute spectators, even today. Consider the speech delivered by the Turkish Prime Minister as a first drop of rain; it is high time Muslim rulers start criticizing and condemning Israel and America, in strict words, so that the flag bearer of Change, President Obama, and his special envoy realize the environment and atmosphere around Israel has been changed. On the other hand, there are Arab countries that can pressure America and its western allies using their oil wealth, but they lack the required courage, boldness, sense of brotherhood and sympathy. They are habitually making appeals and requests. And this weakness of theirs is the basis of Israel's strength."

¶3. "WALKOUT BY TURKISH PRIME MINISTER IS A LESSON", editorial in February 3 right-of-center Urdu daily HAMARA SAMAJ, New Delhi: "Had the leaders of the Islamic world, particularly the extravagant leaders of the Arab world, realized the feelings of millions of their people, they too would have walked out of the meeting along with the Turkish Prime Minister. Their gesture would have made Israel and their western supporters think twice about their deeds. It would have provided Israel with an opportunity to admit its wrongs. If Arab rulers and other

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rulers of the Islamic world had no chance to stop Israeli aggression, they could have broken their silence at last. But they have become mute spectators because of the fear of America and Israel. Millions of people throughout the length and breadth of the globe applaud the ideal attitude of the Turkish Prime Minister."

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IRAN / PALESTINE  
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¶4. "REHEARSAL OF ATTACK ON IRAN", editorial in February 3 right-of-center Urdu daily URDU TIMES, Mumbai: "Since the time Obama entered the White House, dissension throughout the Muslim world has suggested that Muslims, in a nutshell, have not learnt any lesson from America and Israel. Muslims around the globe seem to be happy and satisfied with President Obama's inaugural remarks. It is now quite evident that there are preparations being made to victimize Muslims deceptively. In my opinion, such remarks aim at deceiving Muslims. One important Israeli diplomat said that the attack on Gaza is, in fact, a rehearsal of possible Israeli attacks on Iran. We can guess the next three or four years are important for the entire Middle East. So far as America is concerned, the change in leadership there does not matter. Israel's safety and security is the axis of American foreign policy. It matters little whether it is Bush or Obama, unless the forces of the Middle East like Hizbullah and Hamas rise in support of Iran."

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INDIA-SRI LANKA RELATIONS  
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¶5. "AFTER THE LTTE'S DEFEAT.." op-ed article by retired major general Shashikant Pitre in the February 4, 2009, Mumbai edition of centrist Marathi daily SAKAAL. "Even as the war between the separatist LTTE and the Sri Lankan army is about to end, India needs to help the Sri Lankan government reach a political settlement in this regard. The average Tamil citizen in Sri Lanka is feeling increasingly insecure because he is being equated with the separatists. With general elections just a few months

away in India, the UPA-led Indian government cannot afford to be seen to be irresponsible to Tamil sentiment and demands, since the Sri Lankan Tamils have an impact on the votes in Tamil Nadu. India is generally expected to stand up for the Tamils in every possible way. India needs to play a constructive role in bringing peace in Sri Lanka, and not just for narrow electoral reasons, but also in the interest of stability in South Asia..."

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